THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) and (b) The Government of Rajasthan forwarded a list of 5 proposals for declaration as new National Highways in the 8th Plan including the roads in a question as detailed in list enclosed as Statement [*see* below]. However, due to constraint of financial resources for national Highways made available in the 8th Plan, it is difficult at this stage to declare any new National Highways in any State including Rajasthan. The matter will be re-examined at the time of mid-term in view of the 8th Plan in case financial allocations for National Highways are increased.

(c) There is no proposal for seeking foreign assistance for construction of new National Highways as yet.

Statement

List indicating proposals received from Government of Rajasthan for being declared as National Highways.

RAJASTHAN

(in Km)

1.	Bikaner - Merta-Ajmer - Bhilwara - Chittorgarh - Ratlam - Indore (from NH-15 to NH-3)	455
2.	Gurgaon - Alwar - Sariska - Dausa - Sawaimadhopur - Shivpuri	270
3.	Kosi - Kama - Deeg - Bharatpur - Roopwas - Sepau - Dholpur	140
4.	Extension of NH-11. A from Chandwaji (on NH-8) to Chomu (NH-11) and Chomu to Bagru (on NH-8)	75
5.	Abu - Udaipur - Chittorgarh - Bijolia-Kota - Baran - Shivpuri.	540
	Total :	1480

Tiger Population in the Country

*224 DR. ABRAR AHMED :
SHRI SUDHIR RANJAN MAJUMDAR :

Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what is the tiger population in the country at present;

(b) whether there has been an alarming rise in tiger poaching in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to curb poaching ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) As per 1989 census, the estimated tiger population in the country is 4334.

(b) and (c) No reports of any alarming rise in tiger poaching cases have been received from State wildlife authorities. However, in the case of Ranthambhore, the Kumat enquiry report mentioned some evidence of poaching, the extent of which is not yet known. The state governments have been advised to strengthen vigilance and intensify petrolling around the Tiger Reserves.

Development of Waterways in Andhra Pradesh

*225. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to widen and improve the Buckingham Canal from Vijayawada to Madras;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any other proposals from Andhra Pradesh to develop the existing inland waterways into navigational canals; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal under Government's consideration to widen and improve the Buckingham Canal from Vijayawada to Madras.

(c) and (d) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has also suggested declaration of Godavari and Krishna rivers and Kakinada, Eluru, Commamur and Buckingham Canals as National Waterways.

Demand by Distributors of LPG Cylinders for Fair Commission

*226. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM :
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the distributors of LPG Cylinders have been demanding a fair commission for the delivery of cylinders to the consumers :

(b) whether the LPG dealers have also threatened to stop home delivery of cylinders in case their demand for increase in the commission is not met;

(c) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(d) what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) to (d) A section of LPG distributors under the name "All India LPG Distributors' Federation" have given a notice demanding an increase in the Distributors' Commission, faling which they would resort to closing the distribution from December 22 to 24. 1992 and thereafter stop home-delivery of cylinders w.e.f. December 25, 1992. Their demands were discussed in the Ministry in a meeting with them, and are under consideration of Government.

Maintenance of Roads in Madhya Pradesh

*227. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the roads including National Highways in Madhya Pradesh have become unserviceable after the rains due to big pot-holes and damaged conditions;

(b) if so, what remedial measures Government have taken so far in this regard;

(c) whether Government have provided any special funds for the repair of roads to the Madhya Pradesh Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when Government propose to release such funds for maintenance of roads in the State ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) to (d) Constitutionally, the Government of India are responsible for development and maintenance of National Highways only and other roads are essentially the responsibility of respective State Governments. Maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process and they are being kept generally in traffic worthy condition by taking up repair works from time to time within the funds available. So far, during this year an amount of Rs. 864.17 lakhs has been released for maintenance of National Highways in Madhya Pradesh including such special repairs as have been necessitated by the floods.

Supply of Spares to Railways

*228. SHRI RAM RATAN RAM :
SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the press report published in the Indian Express of 2nd September, 1992 under the caption 'Squeezing the railways on spares';

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto and whether it is a fact that M/s. A.B.B. have considerably increased the price of their spares; and

(c) whether Government have since postponed the award of locomotive contract to M/s. A.B.B. ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIFF) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report contains certain inaccuracies.